

## Exercise and Fatigue Mitigation

One of my more fit colleagues could write a better article about exercise. They not only exercise regularly, they talk about it all the time. Most walk, run, lift weights, or similar exercises. Some get their exercise through housework or yard work. My favorite example is from Steve Miller, a human factors engineer. He enjoys digging holes, planting trees and shrubs. I seek to walk 30 minutes a few times a week and/or swim 30 minutes a few times a week and do strength exercises once or twice a week. In the weeks I do those things, I have more energy, sleep better, and express fewer negative emotions. I don't always do those things. What about you? Do you exercise regularly for your enjoyment, your well being, your health, and/or for fatigue mitigation? Do you exercise five times a week for 30 minutes each time?

I'm always reading books, even during my walks on the treadmill. In the past months, I have read several about health and fitness and weight loss. Every one of them emphasized four components: proper diet, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and meditation. I thought, "Great. Now I need to meditate, also." One of my colleagues has already provided me links to podcasts about meditation. I have decided the best approach is to do physical activities I enjoy and that do not increase my emotional burdens or guilt when I fail. I decided that recently when I went swimming with my grandchildren one night after going on brief walks with them earlier in the day. I will be walking outdoors, hiking at parks, and swimming in the hotel pools where I stay on my travels. I won't be digging holes, unless they are figurative ones.

We recommend that people at work perform some types of light exercise at work, particularly if most of the work is done while sitting down. Most control rooms are providing exercise equipment that can be used at or near the console. Some provide "sit-stand" consoles so controllers can stand up at any time during the shift. One should take advantage of those standing opportunities for a few minutes each hour. We provide "Alertness Exercises" cards that illustrate eight easy exercises that any person can do. We also have exercise bands that can be used at the console. If you would like some of the cards or bands, contact [sarah@pipelineperformancegroup.com](mailto:sarah@pipelineperformancegroup.com).

Scarlet Knight, our health and fitness consultant, provides this advice in the book [Health and Fitness for Shiftworkers](#):

- If your job keeps you posted at a desk for long periods of time, get up and move through a range of motions that stretch the major muscle groups. March in place for a minute. This will increase blood flow bringing a refreshing wave of oxygen and nutrients to your brain and muscles. Set your phone to ping at the top of the hour, reminding you it's time for a stretch break. Even sixty seconds of movement per hour makes a big contribution toward reversing the negative effects of a sedentary lifestyle.
- In an effort to build exercise into your life and make it part of your lifestyle, begin with something you know. Start with something simple like walking. Walking outdoors not only burns calories and fat, it's ideal for strengthening all systems of the body, especially the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. Walking outside refreshes your body and your mind. With oxygen and blood flow refreshing the brain, new ideas and solutions appear. Walking can have a tremendous restoring and cleansing effect mentally as well as physically. It's free, it's enjoyable, and it adds value to your life.

E-mail [scarlet@pipelineperformancegroup.com](mailto:scarlet@pipelineperformancegroup.com) for more information about exercise and fatigue mitigation, health and fitness for shiftworkers, or for information about fatigue management classroom training.

